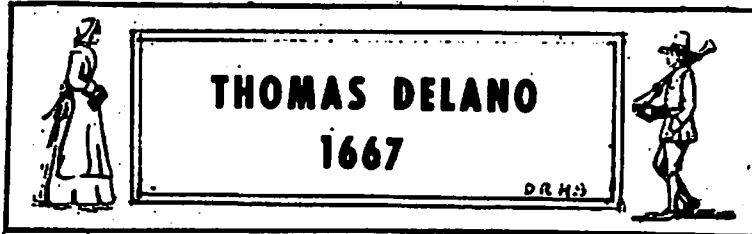


Historical houses - NAMED, A-L

Thursday, August 15, 1968

DUXBURY CLIPPER



On some date prior to October 30, 1667, Thomas Delano, second son of the forefather, Phillip Delano, married Rebecca Alden, a daughter of John and Priscilla Alden. He rode with her, on horseback, from the adjacent Alden and Delano homesteads on the present St. George St. to their new cottage approximately seven miles to the west. His cottage (and his barn) still stand and both constitute one of the very best examples of Pilgrim cottage architecture in the Duxbury community.

When one says Thomas and Rebecca "rode" to their new home it is conjectured that they did so by virtue of the fact that the present-day High St. in the 1600's was the "Old Bay Path" - the main highway to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in Boston. This path was, in reality, the Indian trail of the Wampanoags and allowed only foot or horseback travel.

Just why Thomas left his assured inheritable acres on the ample and protected Delano homestead to move into what then was a "wilderness" is not known. Whatever was his reason, at least his lack of temerity (and that of Rebecca's!) attests to the secure faith that the Pilgrims rightfully placed in the as yet never-broken treaty of peace entered into by them with Chief Massasoit.

Five generations of Delanos lived in the house on the "Old Bay Path" and for 200 years, sons, in succession, inherited the property from their fathers until 1862 when the administrators of Nathan Delano's estate (1781 - 1856) sold it out of the family.

As so often has happened with other Pilgrim cottages, once this house was sold out of the ancestral hive it entered periods of neglect and transient utilitarian "alterations" and "improvements." Hence, in 1933 when Gleason L. Archer bought the Delano cottage it was in a sad state - its architecture distorted by an outrageous (but probably "practical") dormer window and other "modernizations". Its timbers were rotted by neglect, its classic broad central fireplace crumbling, its whole appearance a shambles.

However, through the tireless and devoted efforts over the past 35 years by its present owner, Miss Carrola Bryant (descendent of Stephen Bryant, Duxbury, 1643) the Thomas Delano cottage and its barn have been restored, inside and out, to their original dignified state and appearance. This fruitful undertaking by Carrola Bryant was a far greater task in research, in time and in expense than the mere telling of it indicates. But for us and, it is hoped, for posterity, her dedication and hard work have preserved a Pilgrim landmark of great value and beauty.

And, as an epilogue to the horseback travel of Thomas Delano and his bride, Rebecca Alden, to his cottage 300 years ago on the "Old Bay Path" it is to be noted that new highways and expressways have so changed the travel route to the Bay Colony (Boston) that the "path" of the present day passing the Thomas Delano cottage is again relatively quiet.